WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Unauthorised Coal Minings

784. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many persons are mining in various coal fields unauthorisedly;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the financial loss suffered by coal companies/Government on this account; and

(c) the steps being taken to prevent unauthorised mining in coal fields?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Illegal mining activities are being done in the nature of clandestine extraction and pilferage of coal from the abandoned/disused workings or from outcrop regions within the lease-hold as well as outside the lease-hold areas of the coal companies. Cases of illegal mining have been reported mostly in the States of West Bengal and Jharkhand. Though the illegal mining spots are scattered over the entire coalfield, there are illegal mining prone areas and not necessarily all the spots are worked at a time. Mining is done manually by the local people mostly near the surface often leading to falls, subsidence and fatalities. Steps taken by the coal companies include dozing off/filling up the spots, patrolling, raids, surprise checks etc. FIRs etc. are no doubt restricting the illegal mining activities but to stop the menace, deterrent penal actions from State/District administration are necessary.

However, as illegal mining activities are carried out stealthily and clandestinely, it is not possible to assess its impact in term of financial loss to the State and the company.

(c) While the State/District Administration is required to administer necessary deterrent action following measures are being taken by the coal companies of CIL, to prevent illegal mining of coal in their leasehold areas.

1. Intelligence collection.
2. Round the clock patrolling by own security force and CISF.
3. Surprise checks/raids of illegal mining sites by company security force and CISF.

4. Erection of fencing/walls in abandoned/disused workings, drowning of old workings.

5. Dozing off and filling up the illegal mining sites wherever possible.

6. Black listing the trucks seized carrying coal from such operation.

7. Whenever illegally mined coal and implements of illegal mining of coal are seized during the course of raids, the same are handed over to local police stations and FIRs are lodged.

8. Close liaison is kept with the District and State Authorities seeking their help and cooperation in curbing illegal mining.

Shifting of CIL headquarters from Kolkata

785. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to shift the headquarters of Coal India Limited. out of Kolkata; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Government has received representations in this regard and an appropriate decision will be taken after due consideration of all issues.

Shortage of Coal

786. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is facing acute shortage of coal and now it is proposed to import coal from China and other countries;

(b) if so, what is the current shortage and its future forecast;

(c) whether it is also a fact that coal shortage has cut down production of steel which in turn has increased prices of steel; and

(d) if so, what is Government's action plan to tide over this crisis to help the steel and other industries to raise their production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Coal consuming industries like steel